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(3) Permission should be given to reclaim backwaters and cultivate them.

(4) Backwaters and other irrigation sources already registered should be restored to their original condition.

(5) Irrigation canals, tanks, &c. should be maintained.

(6) Remission of tax should be allowed in all cases of failure of crops.

(7) Model farms should be opened in each taluk and the people taught improved methods of agriculture.

(8) Agricultural banks should be established in each taluk and small loans of money made to ryots on low interest.

(9) Lands fit for cultivation within reserves should be registered in the names of the ryots.

(10) The paddy decreed in courts should be made payable in money at the commutation rate of 11 chs. per para.

Dewan's reply.— I am by no means certain of the growing poverty of the people referred to by the Member. Even if there *is* such growing poverty, it is unlikely that the bringing under cultivation of hills, backwaters, etc. would do much good. Indiscriminate extension of cultivation would probably lead to disastrous results.

6. ***Undesirability of registering Nirthal lands useful for communal purposes.***

Mr. G. Sankaranarayana Iyer (Member, Shencottah Taluk) requested that orders might be issued to prevent the registry of Nirthal lands which were likely to be useful for purposes of common pasturage or roads for agricultural traffic or for enlarging the areas of existing irrigation tanks or those of fuel forests or forests from which agricultural implements could be collected. With a view to secure that object, he suggested the desirability of publishing lists of all available Nirthal lands in each taluk so as to enable the ryots concerned to represent to the local officers the necessity of retaining any, and if so, which of them, for public or communal purposes. At present, several such useful lands were being registered away for nominal prices. The suggestion, if adopted, would save the Government the heavy compensation they would have to pay in the event of any of the lands being subsequently found to be required for any public purpose.

Mr. S. Subramonia Karayalan (Member, Shencottah Taluk) supported the previous speaker.

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Dewan's reply .—The orders as they now stand *do* provide for the transfer of a Nirthal land to the head of poramboke, if, in the opinion of the Division Peishkar, it is deemed necessary to reserve such land for a public or communal purpose. The suggestion that a list should now be made out of all Nirthal lands and published is not considered a practicable one. The Peishkars tell me that the ryots generally know what the Nirthal lands are in each village and it is also open to the ryots to apply, in cases of doubt, for information to the village or taluk officers.

7. *Modification of the rules regarding the minimum rate of assessment fixed for puduval lands and the arrears of tax payable on such lands.*

Mr. Padmanabhan Parameswaran (Member, Pathanapuram Taluk) represented that the recent order of Government fixing a minimum assessment of 5 fanams per acre on puduval lands in the Quilon and Kottayam divisions operated harshly on the ryots. He said that the rate was being adopted by the Revenue department irrespective of the nature of the soil and the *tharam* put upon the lands at the settlement. The rule worked special hardship in the cases of old applications for the registry of puduval lands, as in those cases, even the back arrears, which were being recovered from 1066, were calculated at the enhanced rate. He observed that it could not have been the intention of Government to give the rule any retrospective effect so as to make it applicable even to back arrears. By the operation of the new rule, it was the poor ryots that suffered heavily. He therefore requested that the decision of Government might be favourably reconsidered and orders issued for lands being registered at the old rates of assessment, at least in the cases of poor people who applied for them for purposes of house-building.

Dewan's reply .—The five fanams minimum rate is considered reasonable and it will not be reduced. The question of back arrears, however, is a serious matter. It is one affecting the whole State. It cannot therefore be disposed of solely on the representations of one or two taluks. I shall call on all the Peishkars to report soon on the question, and, as soon as the reports are received, Government will pass orders on the question as reasonably as they can.

8. *Modification of the rules for the grant of remission of tax in cases of failure of crops.*

Mr. S. Subramonia Karayalan (Member, Shencottah Taluk) represented that the ryots experienced great hardship in the practical working of the remission rules. The difficulty was specially felt in cases in which there was only a partial failure of crops. In such cases, the ryots were at present seldom or never granted any remission, though the produce collected from the lands would

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